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UNCLAS ANKARA 004621

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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: TURKISH GOVERNMENT RELEASES ANTI-TIP CIRCULAR  
FOCUSED ON IMPLEMENTATION

REF: STATE 171293

1. In a significant step to further implementation of Turkish laws and policy combating trafficking in persons, the Interior Ministry (MOI) recently issued a circular to all governors and senior security officials -- including the Jandarma -- calling for tougher implementation of existing regulations. In a conversation with us July 22, MOI Secretary General Nezhir Dogan confirmed press reports that

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the new circular is part of the wider GOT Action Plan to combat TIP. According to Dogan, the circular:

-- increases the penalty against those who force foreigners into prostitution -- those convicted of trafficking in persons will face 5-10 years "heavy imprisonment;"

-- grants temporary visa extensions and/or supplementary residency permits to victims of trafficking and instructs that they be treated as victims not criminals;

-- instructs local officials to establish shelters for victims;

-- instructs border control personnel to be more alert to the status of groups of young women entering Turkey.

2. Dogan asserted to us that this circular "is much more detailed" than previous memoranda on trafficking. The circular also includes an "Implementation Guide" designed to spell out exactly who is responsible for carrying out MOI's instructions on TIP. The circular, Dogan explained, outlines a four-tier system of monitoring implementation: 1) governors and police chiefs; 2) MOI Inspectors; 3) Public Prosecutors; and 4) public opinion, which Dogan said is becoming more outspoken and therefore more influential on this issue.

3. This circular was noted in a number of local newspapers, demonstrating the interest of the GOT in informing public opinion to motivate the public to assist in combating TIP.

4. We will continue to follow up with MOI officials to underscore the importance of implementation of GOT anti-TIP initiatives.

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